

Oyster Bay Nursery

Intimate Care Policy

Date written: October 2026

Date of last update: October 2026

Date agreed and ratified by October 2026

Date of next full review: September 2027

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and/or following any lessons learnt and/or updates to national or local guidance and procedures.

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Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)	Grace Sidders Rachel Finch
Nominated Individual	Debra Hines
Nursery Manager	Grace Sidders

1. Policy Statement

Oyster Bay Nursery is committed to ensuring that all children receive intimate care in a safe, respectful and professional manner. We recognise that intimate care is an important part of a child's health, wellbeing, dignity and development.

No child should receive care in a way that causes unnecessary distress, embarrassment, discomfort or pain. Staff must respect each child's privacy, individual needs, family circumstances, cultural background and stage of development.

This policy applies to all staff and other authorised individuals involved in providing intimate care to children attending Oyster Bay Nursery.

It should be read alongside the nursery's:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Medication, Illness and Sickness Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Inclusion Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Staff Recruitment and Safer Recruitment procedures
- Arrivals, Departures and Uncollected Child Policy

The term *parent* includes parents, carers and legal guardians.

2. Definition of Intimate Care

Intimate care is care that involves close physical contact with a child to support personal hygiene, health, comfort or daily living needs. It may include:

- Changing nappies and cleaning a child after toileting.
- Supporting children to use the toilet.
- Washing and drying intimate areas.
- Helping a child change wet or soiled clothing.
- Supporting children with handwashing and other personal hygiene routines.
- Assisting with dressing and undressing where necessary.
- Supporting children with disabilities, additional needs or medical conditions that affect personal care.

- Supporting the use of prescribed medical equipment or carrying out specific medical procedures where appropriate.

Any medical or invasive procedure, including the administration of rectal medication or management of specialised medical equipment, must only be undertaken where the nursery has agreed that it can safely provide the care, appropriate written authorisation and an individual care plan are in place, and staff have received the necessary training and competency assessment.

3. Aims and Principles

The aims of this policy are to:

- Protect children's dignity, privacy, rights and wellbeing.
- Ensure intimate care is provided safely, sensitively and consistently.
- Safeguard children from harm and inappropriate behaviour.
- Reassure parents that their child's personal care needs will be handled professionally.
- Encourage children to develop confidence and independence.
- Ensure that children's wishes, communication needs and individual circumstances are considered.
- Provide clear guidance to staff about their responsibilities and the procedures they must follow.

Every child will be treated with respect and understanding. Intimate care must never be used as a punishment, and no child should be shamed, blamed or made to feel embarrassed about needing assistance.

4. Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers

Oyster Bay Nursery recognises that parents are important partners in understanding and meeting a child's intimate care needs.

Before a child starts nursery, parents will be asked to share relevant information about their child's toileting, nappy changing, personal hygiene, medical needs, communication and any particular preferences or sensitivities.

Staff will discuss individual arrangements with parents where a child requires additional or specialised support. Parents should inform the nursery of any changes to their child's needs.

The nursery will:

- Explain its intimate care procedures to parents.

- Obtain appropriate parental consent for routine intimate care arrangements and any agreed additional support.
- Consult parents about relevant religious, cultural or personal considerations.
- Agree individual intimate care plans where required.
- Share relevant information sensitively and confidentially.
- Work with parents and relevant professionals to promote consistency between home and nursery.

Parental consent does not replace the need to respond appropriately to a child's immediate care needs or safeguarding concerns. Staff must always act in the child's best interests and follow nursery procedures.

5. Individual Intimate Care Plans

An individual intimate care plan will be developed where a child has ongoing, additional or specialised intimate care needs, or where a written plan is otherwise considered necessary.

The plan should be developed in partnership with the child, where appropriate, their parents, relevant nursery staff and health or other professionals as needed.

The plan should include, where relevant:

- The child's individual needs and the care required.
- The child's preferred communication methods and terminology.
- The child's preferences and any signs of discomfort or distress.
- The agreed procedure and equipment required.
- Arrangements for privacy, supervision and safeguarding.
- The staff members responsible and arrangements for cover.
- Relevant medical information, allergies or health considerations.
- Hygiene, cleaning and waste-disposal arrangements.
- Steps to promote independence and self-care.
- How care will be recorded and communicated to parents.
- What staff should do if the child becomes distressed, refuses care or an unexpected concern arises.
- Emergency arrangements and contact details where appropriate.

- The date for review and the people responsible for reviewing the plan.

Plans should be reviewed regularly and whenever the child's needs change. Copies must be stored securely, with access limited to staff who need the information to care for the child safely.

6. The Child's Voice, Choice and Dignity

Children should be involved in their intimate care as far as their age, development and understanding allow.

Staff must:

- Explain what they are going to do in language the child understands.
- Seek the child's cooperation and, where appropriate, permission before beginning.
- Offer choices wherever possible, such as choosing clean clothes or deciding which step to do independently.
- Pay attention to the child's words, gestures, facial expressions and body language.
- Use the child's agreed communication methods, including words, signs, symbols or communication aids.
- Respect the child's reasonable preferences about the sequence of care and, where practicable, the staff member providing it.
- Encourage children to complete appropriate parts of their own care.
- Respond promptly if a child appears uncomfortable, frightened or distressed.

If a child resists or becomes distressed, staff should remain calm, reassure the child and consider the reason. They should not force routine intimate care unnecessarily. Where care is essential for the child's health or safety, staff should seek appropriate senior guidance and work with parents to agree a suitable approach.

Any repeated distress, unexplained fear or concern about a particular person or procedure must be reported to the DSL and managed in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

7. Nappy Changing and Toileting Procedures

Nappy changing and toileting support will be provided in a calm, respectful and hygienic manner.

Staff will:

1. Prepare the required equipment before beginning.
2. Wash their hands and put on disposable gloves and any other appropriate protective clothing.
3. Explain the process to the child and involve them as much as possible.
4. Use the designated changing area and suitable changing mat or changing surface.
5. Never leave a child unattended on a raised changing surface.
6. Clean the child gently and thoroughly, following appropriate hygiene procedures.
7. Dispose of nappies and wipes in the designated waste container.
8. Clean and disinfect the changing surface and any contaminated equipment in accordance with the nursery's cleaning procedures.
9. Remove and dispose of gloves safely and wash their hands thoroughly.
10. Help the child dress and ensure they are comfortable before returning to activities.
11. Record the change or any relevant concern in accordance with nursery procedures.

Children who are learning to use the toilet will be supported patiently and positively. Staff must not shame children for accidents, delay access to the toilet as a punishment or pressure children to become toilet trained before they are ready.

Parents will be informed of relevant patterns, concerns or changes in a child's toileting needs.

8. Privacy and Safeguarding During Intimate Care

The nursery will balance a child's right to privacy with the need to protect children and staff.

Intimate care must take place in an appropriate designated area that protects the child's dignity while allowing suitable safeguarding oversight. Staff must follow the nursery's arrangements for visibility, supervision and access to assistance.

Where practicable:

- One staff member will provide routine intimate care to one child.
- Another staff member will be nearby or within calling distance so that assistance can be obtained promptly.

- Additional staff may be involved where required by the child's care plan, a medical procedure, moving and handling needs or a safeguarding risk assessment.
- The reason for any additional staff involvement will be documented where appropriate.
- Doors and privacy arrangements will be managed in accordance with the nursery's safeguarding procedures and the child's needs.

Staff must not lock themselves away with a child or create unnecessary secrecy around intimate care. A child must never be left in an unsafe or undignified situation simply to preserve privacy.

Mobile phones, personal cameras and other unauthorised recording devices must not be used in intimate care areas. Staff must not photograph or record a child during intimate care.

9. Hygiene, Equipment and Facilities

The nursery will ensure that suitable facilities and equipment are available to support safe intimate care, including, as appropriate:

- Disposable gloves and protective clothing.
- Nappies, wipes and suitable hygiene products.
- Clean spare clothing.
- A suitable changing mat or changing surface.
- Appropriate cleaning and disinfecting products.
- Handwashing facilities and soap.
- Suitable containers for the safe disposal of nappies and other waste.
- Equipment required by an individual care plan.

Staff must follow product instructions when using cleaning materials and ensure that such products are kept out of children's reach.

Wet or soiled clothing will be placed in a suitable bag or container and returned to parents, following the nursery's usual procedures. Any contaminated area or equipment must be cleaned promptly.

10. Medical Procedures and Additional Needs

Some children may need additional support because of a disability, SEND, a medical condition or a developmental need.

Oyster Bay Nursery will consider reasonable adjustments and work with parents and relevant professionals to identify appropriate arrangements.

A staff member may only undertake a specialised or invasive procedure if:

- The nursery has agreed that the procedure can be safely provided.
- Appropriate written instructions, consent and an individual care plan are in place.
- The staff member has received relevant training and has been assessed as competent.
- Suitable equipment and emergency arrangements are available.
- The procedure is consistent with the nursery's policies and insurance arrangements.

Staff must not carry out a procedure for which they have not been trained or authorised. If the nursery cannot safely meet a child's needs, the Nursery Manager will discuss the matter with the parents and relevant professionals to identify a safe and appropriate way forward.

11. Staff Recruitment, Training and Responsibilities

All staff are subject to the nursery's safer recruitment and safeguarding procedures, including the required suitability checks.

Staff involved in intimate care must:

- Read and follow this policy and related safeguarding procedures.
- Receive appropriate induction and safeguarding training.
- Understand the individual needs and care plans of children they support.
- Maintain professional boundaries at all times.
- Respect confidentiality and share information only with those who need it.
- Know how to report concerns, accidents, incidents and allegations.
- Seek advice from the Nursery Manager or DSL if unsure about any aspect of care.

The Nursery Manager is responsible for ensuring that staff understand their responsibilities, appropriate training is provided, individual care plans are maintained and suitable facilities and procedures are in place.

12. Recognising and Reporting Concerns

Children who need intimate care may be particularly vulnerable. Staff must remain alert to changes in a child's behaviour, unexplained injuries, soreness, distress, fear or other indicators that may require further attention.

If a child is accidentally hurt during intimate care, staff must:

- Stop and ensure the child is safe.
- Provide appropriate first aid or medical assistance.
- Reassure the child calmly.
- Inform the Nursery Manager or DSL promptly.
- Record the incident accurately in accordance with nursery procedures.
- Inform parents at an appropriate time, unless doing so could compromise a safeguarding response.

If a child makes a disclosure, shows signs of possible abuse or expresses concern about intimate care, staff must listen carefully, remain calm, avoid leading questions and report the concern to the DSL immediately. Staff must not promise secrecy or investigate the allegation themselves.

Concerns must be recorded factually and securely, including relevant words used by the child where possible, and entered into My Concern in line with the nursery's safeguarding procedures.

If an allegation is made against a staff member, the nursery's safeguarding and allegations procedures must be followed. The DSL or manager will seek advice from the appropriate local authority safeguarding service or designated allegations adviser where required. The staff member must not investigate the allegation themselves.

Where a child is distressed by care from a particular staff member, the nursery will take the concern seriously, assess the child's immediate needs and consider alternative staffing arrangements while the matter is reviewed.

13. Confidentiality and Record Keeping

Information about a child's intimate care must be treated sensitively and stored securely.

Information will only be shared with parents, staff and professionals who need it to support the child's care, wellbeing or safeguarding.

Staff must not discuss a child's personal care needs in public areas or with people who are not authorised to receive the information. Routine care information should be recorded using the nursery's approved systems rather than personal devices or informal messages.

Records of incidents, injuries, unusual concerns or safeguarding matters must be completed promptly, factually and in accordance with the relevant nursery policies.

14. Promoting Independence and Personal Safety

Oyster Bay Nursery will help children develop confidence and independence in managing their personal care.

Staff will encourage children to undertake age-appropriate tasks, such as washing and drying their hands, managing clothing, recognising when they need the toilet and asking for help when needed.

Children will be supported to understand, at a level appropriate to their age and development, that:

- Their bodies deserve respect.
- They can communicate when they feel uncomfortable.
- They can ask a trusted adult for help.
- Personal care should be carried out respectfully and for a proper care-related reason.

Staff will use appropriate, consistent language for body parts and personal care and respond sensitively to questions or concerns.

15. Monitoring and Review

The Nursery Manager will monitor implementation of this policy and ensure that staff receive relevant guidance and training.

The policy will be reviewed at least annually, or sooner if there are changes to legislation, statutory guidance, safeguarding procedures, nursery practice or children's needs.